

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 2, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write today to express our strong support for Virginia Governor Ralph S. Northam's request for an appeal of the denial of Individual Assistance (IA) for Buchanan County as part of your Major Disaster Declaration that was issued for the county on October 26, 2021.

While we appreciate your recent issuance of a Major Disaster Declaration for Buchanan County, we concur with the Commonwealth's assessment that IA should be made available to our constituents to assist in their recovery from this tragic flood event.

On August 31, 2021, Governor Northam declared a state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia following severe flooding, landslides, and mudslides that occurred on August 30, 2021. On this date, the unincorporated area of Hurley, Virginia, experienced an extreme rainfall event resulting in 8-10 inches of rain being released in a short amount of time. This rainfall event caused heavy floods, landslides, and mudslides that resulted in extensive damage in and around Hurley.

On October 26, 2021, we were pleased that you approved Virginia's request for a Major Disaster Declaration, which provided Public Assistance for Buchanan County and Hazard Mitigation for the Commonwealth of Virginia. However, on October 29, 2021, we were disappointed that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a formal denial of Governor Northam's request for Individual Assistance for Buchanan County.

As you know, IA is an incredibly important tool for communities that have been devastated by natural disasters. FEMA provides IA directly to individuals and households who have sustained significant losses as a direct result of a natural disaster that received a federal disaster declaration. This assistance can include grants to help pay for temporary housing, emergency home repairs, uninsured and underinsured property losses, and other critical needs. The unlocking of IA for the residents of Hurley would go a long way towards helping this community recover from this extreme weather event.

Again, we thank you for your continued support for the residents of Buchanan County, Virginia, following the August 30, 2021 flood event. To ensure a fulsome recovery for this community, we urge your full and fair consideration of Virginia's appeal for Individual Assistance for our constituents in and around Hurley.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and please let us know if we can be helpful to you in any way.

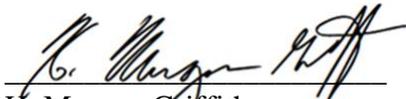
Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
U.S. Senator



Tim Kaine
U.S. Senator



H. Morgan Griffith
Member of Congress

cc: Deanne Criswell, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency